

2003 Report of Accomplishments

Thurston Conservation District



Natural Resource Improvements in 2003 - Summary

- We assisted landowners in the implementation of 633 Best Management Practices (BMPs). These practices resulted in improved soil fertility and improved water quality, particularly in the McAllister Creek area.
- We restored approximately 350 feet of in-stream habitat and planted nearly 190 acres of riparian buffer, benefiting wildlife (including salmon), and water quality.
- We installed just over 9,020 feet of riparian fence (nearly 2 miles). This includes fencing along water bodies to keep livestock out of them, thereby protecting water quality and important habitat for wildlife such as salmon and shellfish.



Mission of the Thurston Conservation District

- To conserve, sustain, and protect our natural resources for the people of Thurston County through: rural and urban partnerships, fostering volunteerism, cooperation, education, leadership, and technical and financial assistance.

Water Quality Implementation

- TCD assisted over 50 landowners on more than 300 acres by purchasing and loaning out a ground-driven manure spreader. We also developed a display, a video and brochures to market the spreader program.
- We provided 450 soil tests and conducted water quality testing on 19 streams to monitor/evaluate the effectiveness of BMPs.
- Produced a public access tv show on water quality tips & proper nutrient application.
- We evaluated our services to the community by conducting a "customer evaluation"

Basic Funding

- The District hosted the Thurston County Envirothon academic competition for local high school students. Our local winner won the state competition and went on to the Nationals held in Maryland.

Local Funding

- Our WCC Crew provided 5,200 hours of work in the community restoring streambanks, installing fence, maintaining stormwater ponds, etc.
- District staff provided over 2000 hours technical assistance and support to landowners whose property was not covered by a grant program.
- Local funding enabled the District to secure numerous grants to benefit natural resource conservation in the County. Every dollar of assessment funds enabled the District to bring in 175% more funds through grants from Commission, DOE, Interagency Committee, and both the State and Federal Fish & Wildlife Services.
- Over 40% of the South Sound GREEN program was funded. More than 2,170 Thurston County teachers and students were educated. Water quality was monitored on 19 streams and macroinvertebrates were monitored on 7 streams.
- A countywide in-person and vote by mail election for District Supervisor was conducted.

Puget Sound/Water Quality

- We sold 29,190 native plants to 614 individuals during our 2003 annual plant sale. Ciscoe Morris was our guest speaker.

Professional Engineering

- Five major projects included design and installation of a livestock crossing bridge in the McLane area, roof design and installation of a dry stack manure storage structure in the Delphi Valley, a stream restoration project in the Tenino area, design of a tank for a dairy operation in Rochester, and design for stream restoration and culvert replacement on Perry Creek. Additional designs and consultation were provided for District technical staff.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- Five new riparian planting and fencing projects were completed in the past year.
- 6,003 feet of fencing was installed and 8,900 plants were planted on 13.68 acres.

Dairy

- *The District developed and our board approved 4 Dairy Nutrient Management Plans and certified 9 dairies.*
- *The District provided cost share to 12 dairies in Thurston County totaling \$126,464.19. These dairies make up 4,826 acres of farmland in Thurston County.*

Salmon & Shellfish Restoration

- *The District dedicated 28% of local funding directly to shellfish restoration in two county shellfish protection districts.*
- *The District served as Lead Entity for WRIA 13. Three projects, totaling \$931,285, were authorized affecting land acquisition and replacing culverts to enhance fish passage.*
- *Six conservation plans, with the goal of 75% implementation of best management practices, were prepared for the Nisqually watershed. Sixteen plans were prepared for farms in the Henderson watershed.*

Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration

- *A livestock crossing was installed on McLane Creek, eliminating the need for the farmer to walk his horses through the creek to reach the grazing fields.*
- *Approximately 85 landowners were assisted with open space habitat assessment plans, wildlife management plans, planting plans, noxious weed removal and snag placement*
- *100 ft of shoreline along Long Lake was replanted with native vegetation.*

Small Farm Programs

- *We assisted landowners with the development of 17 Conservation Plans.*
- *We provided follow up assistance to 96 landowners who have Conservation Plans.*

Community Collaboration & Coordination

- *The District participated in the Shellfish Stakeholder groups for the Nisqually and Henderson watersheds.*
- *South Sound GREEN provided watershed education to 42 school classrooms.*
- *The District participated in the Environmental Education Technical Advisory Committee and continues to provide representation on the Natural Resources Youth Camp and the Envirothon Boards.*
- *The District coordinated with Thurston County Environmental Health on resolving issues on farms that violate the Non-Point Ordinance.*
- *The District participated in the Nisqually & Chehalis River Councils, and the WRIA 11 salmon recovery funding process.*
- *Representatives from the District attend the South Sound Farm Bureau and Agricultural Committee meetings.*

Information & Education

- *We distributed nearly 1,300 booklets & fact sheets to local residents. These documents offer suggestions and guidance to residents on such subjects as planting, noxious weeds, managing manure, bats, birdhouses, composting, etc.*
- *We led 8 workshops and made 36 presentations, educating the public about pasture/manure management, Horses for Clean Water, shellfish, manure, water quality issues & solutions and services available through the District.*
- *We provided instructors at the Natural Resources Youth Camp, Millersylvania Outdoor School and led the regional Envirothon.*
- *We aired 12 different shows 24 times on public access television (TCTV), reaching 20,000 homes daily.*
- *We published 9 information articles in the Nisqually Valley News and The Daily Olympian. These ads reached approximately 150,000 homes in Thurston County. These articles provided useful tips and information on such subjects as water quality, farm management, upcoming events and services we provide.*
- *The District provided more than 96 designs for the Violet-Green Swallow bird box design. These swallows consume mosquitoes, which helps reduce the risk of West Nile Virus exposure.*

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

